1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1895 NU31 Seri NU31

As an illustration of the ordination in some 129
what unusual circumstances, it may be noted that when the "Seri 562
belle" (Candelaria) refused to pose for a photograph she was supported 626
by the clanmother (Juana María) until the latter was placated by presents; and that when the belle refused to obey the mother's command—to the vociferous scandal of the entire group—Juana María appealed to Señor Encinas, as the conqueror of the tribe and hence as the virtual head of both rancho and rancheria. And when a younger Seri maiden (plate XXV) similarly refused to pose, and in like manner disobeyed her mother (again to the general disgust), the latter appealed to Mashém; when he, after first exacting additional presents for both girl and mother and a double amount for himself, put hands on the recalcitrant demoiselle and forced her into the pose required, despite the shrinking and tremulous terror perceptible even in the picture.

Commonly the regimentation of family, clan, and larger group appears 592
to be indicated approximately by the placement assumed spontaneously in the idle lounging of peace and plenty. A typical placement of a small group is illustrated in plate XIV. Here the family are assembled outside the jacal, but in the relative positions which would be assumed within. The matron (a Red Pelican woman) squats in easy reach of her few and squalid possessions; on her left, i. e., in the group background and place of honor, sits the elderwoman of the rancheria (a Turtle); then comes the daughter of the family, followed by two girl-child guests of the group, the three occupying positions pertaining to chiefs or elder brothers or, in their absence, to daughters; opposite the matron sits a younger brother,[1] whose wife is a Turtle woman (daughter of the dame in the place of honor) and matron of another jacal. A few feet behind this brother (just outside the limits of the photograph reproduced, though shown on the duplicate negative) squats the husband, with his side to the group and face toward the direction of natural approach; while the place belonging to the sons of the family on the matron's right is temporarily occupied by a White Pelican girl, together with a dog, notable in the local pack for largely imported blood and correspondingly docile disposition. The place for the babe, were there one in the family, would be on the heap of odds and ends behind the matron. As in this group so in most others, the place of the sons [858]
is vacant; for the boys are at once the most restless and the most law- [882]
less members of the tribe—indeed, the striplings seem often to ignore the maternal injunctions and even to evade the rarely uttered avuncular orders, so that their movements are practically free, except in so far as they are themselves regimented or graded by strength and fleetness and success in hunting.

The raison d'être of the proprietorship and regimentation reflected in 302
the everyday customs is satisfactorily indicated by that totemic feature 614
of the social organization revealed in the face-painting described in

[1] This man was one of those involved in the Robinson butchery on Tiburon island a few months before the picture was taken; and he was one of those executed or transported for the affair during the interval between the 1894 and 1895 expeditions.

773 Before this it was day all the time, but then it became night and coyote only laughs at night. The black strings still hang about badger's neck."

It is strange to find, too, that a flood legend is traditional among the Seris. Chico said: "In the times of the ancients a great flood came, the ocean rose up and all the country of the Seris was under water except the top of Cerro Alto. There a few Seris gathered and were saved. Everyone else was drowned. To this day the top of Cerro Alto is covered with brush which the flood did not submerge. All Seri children are taught this flood tradition, and they must learn it by heart so as to teach their children and their grandchildren."

764 The death of a tribesman gives no cause for ceremony among the Seris, although the [765] nearest relatives may customarily wail, sometimes for months, morning and evening. The disposal of the bodies of the dead, is, however, of considerable interest. A hole about [412] three feet deep is dug by means of large clam shells and a cave is excavated for the head such that the earth will not touch it. The deceased Indian is wrapped in his own blanket and laid in the grave with the head to the East, face up. The body is covered and the grave is partly filled with earth, then covered with a layer of the spiniest of chollas and thorny brush, further filled, leveled and covered with another layer of chollas to discourage the coyotes from digging up the body. When the Seris are on the move, how- [766] ever, and grave-digging is too great a task, a body may simply be lifted high to the fork of a giant cactus and left there.

583 Marriage among the Seris is not so much 585 a ceremony as it is the completion of a bargain. Under ordinary circumstances, when a man buys a woman he strikes a bargain with the bride's parents and makes a down payment. Only after completion of the bargain does the woman go to live with the man, but even then payments do not cease but continue intermittently through life. Chico Romero, although "married" for fifteen years, gave his wife's father some paint that he had received in payment for guiding and 425 packing. It is also considered natural to 858 buy and sell children. One Seri, Santo

[p. 266 (B)]
[Text continues on p. 267 (B)]

3:Davis & Dawson E-5 (1922-1940) 1945
NU31 Seri NU31

425 Blanco, whose son was only sixteen years
458 old, bought outright for him a little girl of
six years.

When contracts for fish were secured by
621 the Mexicans from American markets in

[p. 267(B)]